

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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In the early part of April 1951, Fred Oelssner, member of the Politburo of the SED, gave a lecture dealing with the resolutions of the SED Central Committee at its 5th meeting, before an assembly of picked SED members. The following points raised by Oelssner appear worth reporting:

1. The re-examination of Party memberships has been blighted and its purpose defeated by the so-called "Versoehnlertum" (i.e., an excessive tendency to forgive). Even before Hermann Matern submitted his report to the Central Committee, the Politburo had recognized the dangers inherent in "Versoehnlertum" and correctly diagnosed it as an outgrowth of "Opportunismus". The quota of members to be excluded had officially been set at between 8 and 10%. Instead the following has resulted: 95 % of the Party membership have been issued a new Party document. Two percent have been reduced to the status of candidates. Two percent have been eliminated from the Party rolls. Only 1 1/2 % have been ousted. What is the reason for this? The base and district commissions shirked responsibility. There was a growing tendency on the part of the base commissions to refer cases to the district commissions who in turn shirked responsibility.
2. The re-examination of Party memberships has revealed many ideological weaknesses. Particularly the Party schools are to be blamed for this. Their teachings have not been sufficiently linked with the practical tasks of the Party. However, the re-examination of Party memberships has also yielded a number of successful developments: Exceptional activation of Party work has been noted, particularly expressed in an increased participation in the "Parteilehrjahr". The following individual commitments (Selbstverpflichtungen) have also increased: a. efforts to raise the members' ideological level; b. the taking on of additional Party functions; c. improved work in industrial production. (No improvement has been noted in respect to work in the mass organizations.) New cadres have been discovered and developed. Work in the Party examination commissions has conveyed, to those Party members engaged in it, new experiences in Party work. They have been able to form a true picture of conditions in the Party.
3. Considerable misunderstandings prevail about the theory of the just and unjust war. Our peace propaganda may have been partially to blame for this; it bears certain pacifist characteristics. The basic character of the Russo-Finnish War in 1939, the attitude adopted by the USSR when Czechoslovakia was attacked, and the Russo-German non-aggression pact in 1939 are often not fully understood.

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4. Our alliance with the farming population has also not been comprehended. RIAS contends that we are planning to collectivize farms in our zone. They are intent on disturbing our alliance with the farmers. Objectively speaking, it must be conceded that certain existing conditions support this trend, viz., the activities of MAS and the tendencies among new settlers to cooperate with each other along collective lines.
5. In our relationship with the USSR, we have entered a new phase. It is not sufficient to know all about its accomplishments. We must now proceed to the practical application of the experiences and accomplishments of the USSR. That is the reason why we are sending so many delegations to the USSR.
6. Current conditions call for the imperative necessity of strengthening the Party functionary apparatus. The transfer of Party functionaries to State positions has to cease. We should aim at making the district secretary stronger than the Landrat (ranking State official in a district) and the section chief of the Economic Section in the various SED Land Directorates stronger than the Ministers of Economic Affairs. The Karl Marx Academy must shift its emphasis from training propagandists to training Party secretaries.

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